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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

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SUBJECT Speech by Wilhelm Pieck at Secret SED Meeting

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This document is hereby regraded to
CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the
policy of 16 October 1978 from the
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Archivist of the United States.

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SUPPLEMENT

ORIGIN

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In a secret meeting of 25 SED functionaries on 27 October 1946, Wilhelm Pieck spoke along the following lines:

1. "We ourselves will soon have to decide about production and economy in the Soviet Zone, including those enterprises in Russian hands. We must understand that this is possible only because we are dealing with a socialist country. We will receive large scale deliveries from Poland and Russia, both in raw materials and food. These developments will take shape within the next six months.

Comment: There have been numerous reports that a Central Government for the entire Soviet Zone will soon be inaugurated. A (date of information 15 October 1946) quotes Dr. Paul Konitzer, President of the Central Administration of Health, to the effect that he, Dr. Konitzer, is convinced that the Central Administrations will go out of existence in their present form by spring or summer of 1947. Their function will be taken over by central offices for the entire area of post-war Germany.

2. "It is our duty to guide the course of events, to take our position in respect to present conditions, and to attempt a fruitful analysis. Primary emphasis must be placed on the renewed effort to defeat reactionary powers. These powers find support not only among the bourgeoisie, but also among the workers—see the attitude of the CDU and LDP, and also of the SPD. They see the ghost of Bolshevism; they reject democratization as it has been carried out in the Soviet Zone. They see in it the danger of dictatorship, a word surrounded by much abuse. Between Nazi dictatorship and a dictatorship of the working class there are essential differences. We do not use the word 'dictatorship' today, but we know that a situation will arise where we will be forced to fight reaction with brutal methods. The growth of the power of the proletariat depends on the struggle against these reactionary powers. We have already officially announced that, if they attempt to cross our path, we will proceed against them with revolutionary methods.
3. "We must construct our basic program on the events of the day. We see how the SPD attempts to disguise the plight of the German people. We have to raise the question of socialism as the urgent task of the day in order to create the prerequisites for unity of the working class, and we have to prove that the SPD is playing into the hands of reactionaries. The big task is to make clear to the SPD workers the difference between them and their reactionary leaders.

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We know that the bourgeois parties received votes not only from Social Democrats but also from our own ranks; the members of our party did not vote unanimously for us. We must not place the blame on the masses but on ourselves. However, when we speak of the victory of the SED in the Soviet Zone, that is not false, for in actuality the SED is the sole leading force in the zone. The supposition that, if the SPD had been allowed in the zone, the result would have been the same as in Berlin is erroneous.

4. "In the Soviet Zone we have rendered reaction powerless and have begun democratic reconstruction, but the weakness of our party is that we are not yet inwardly united, which we must be if we are to influence the masses. We approached the united party with misgivings on both sides, Communists and Social Democrats. The necessity of merging was evident, but the essential conditions for complete unity were not yet at hand. The necessity for complete unity is today greater than ever.
5. "We are rapidly approaching the point where the German people, particularly in the Soviet Zone, must take over complete and sole responsibility for their economic and political development, and also for the constitution of the state. The idea of Germany as a federative state (Bundesstaat) is strongly rooted in the proletariat, but there are also other interests behind these federalistic endeavors. There is the effort of reaction to create new strongholds and to prevent the working people from emerging as one united force in all Germany.
6. "The necessity of our becoming independent is rapidly drawing near. There will be conferences about a peace treaty but that will not be decided in months. Much time will pass before an agreement is reached and we must count on more than one very difficult situation. We see the efforts to erect a western block against the Soviet Union. The danger of Germany being split into two parts may arise. Reaction is attempting to create certain understandings with the SPD. If we analyze Dr. Schumacher's arguments critically, we see that they are the same as those of the other reactionary parties.
7. "We, as a party, are not duty bound today to justify all the measures of the Soviet Union. On the contrary, when important interests of the working people are at stake, we must fight for them, regardless of whether this means opposition to the measures of the Soviet Union. We will show what the interests of the working people demand without forgetting that the German people owe great debts to other countries. We know that the question of the eastern frontier has been used for chauvinistic propaganda. If we were simply to accept the facts, we would appear as advocates of the separation; that would not be to our benefit. We must show the German people that there is only one solution: destruction of reaction and guarantee of a truly democratic regime by the decision of the masses. Our living space (Lebensraum) is not the space in which we live, but our trade relations with other countries. Thus far we have built up our party on the principle of parity (between SPD and KPD). In this way, our party apparatus became larger than was, perhaps, justifiable. If we are able to create ideological unity and complete agreement, this principle of parity will no longer be necessary. From the former KPD men, we demand somewhat more modesty. We see in them great weaknesses, weaknesses in respect to the truly democratic policy which we must adopt, not as a mere tactical maneuver, but as the sole means of winning over the great masses."

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8. "In respect to our relations with the Soviet Union, I declare that we must count on much resistance. This is not merely because of the witch hunt of reaction, but also because of the fact that the advance of the Soviet Army has influenced the masses extraordinarily against us. Even today, seeing our cooperation with the Soviet Army, people equate the SED with the occupational power (which allegedly is guilty of rape, assault, etc., things which still happen today and ruin much of our effort). All that puts a heavy load on our party and on our policy. We must show the masses the other side of the picture. It would have been much worse for our people if the Soviet Union had not been among the victors. We see that in the west reaction has not been deprived of power; there has been no land reform, no socialization of industry; that, on the contrary, reaction there is once again at the helm. We, in the Soviet Zone, have essentially better living conditions than in the west; that, we must emphasize. The Soviet occupational power often has shown over-zealousness and lack of political insight among its lower echelons, local commanders, etc., never, however, any hostile tendency but, rather, everywhere the will to help us. This is the way we must explain to the population our collaboration with the occupational power. In regard to the new dismantling, here again we can point to events in the west and to our duty of making good the damage we have done to the Soviet people.
9. "The plight of our people is very serious. Great economic difficulties cannot be avoided. There is no peace treaty; a whole series of questions, such as the economic basis of Germany's future, we cannot answer. Nevertheless, we, as a party, must approach all problems with full self-confidence. How far we can go publicly depends on the occupational power. Censorship is often a secret with seven seals. If, as proposed, we were to object to the deportation (of workers to Russia), then tomorrow numerous opposition papers would say "Look! Even the SED is forced to turn against the Soviet Union". So, in this direction, we are powerless. We have to deliver reparations out of current production. That is a process which will end with the peace treaty. In the west, concerns are passing into the hands of foreign capitalists and German workers in those plants are working for foreign capital. An actual colonization is in process there. Another point is that England and American have no interest in reparations deliveries of German goods because they themselves are approaching a depression.
10. "With regard to the SPD, we have to cooperate with this party. It shall not prove what it can do, but we will prove what we can do. We will force the SPD to take a stand on all decisive questions. In the district and city councils, we will raise these problems and we will insist on an answer. Our goal will be to bring about a union of the Soviet Democratic workers with us. We will prove that there is a serious danger in recent developments in Berlin, because the SPD leaders have fallen into the hands of reaction. We will give them no chance to say that, because of the intransigence of the SED, they were forced to unite with reaction. We are confident that we can bring about a merger, not today or tomorrow, but it will come. The course of events will bring it about. Then they demand of us today, in demagogic fashion, that we split up, we have a very good answer - they are just demanding this because they know very well that we are the stronger party and because they know that they cannot carry out their policy here, as in the west, because we are here."

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